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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000722

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TAGS: [KPKO](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SO](#) [UNSC](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA: INCHING CLOSER TO SANCTIONS DESIGNATIONS

REF: A. USUN 701

[B](#). USUN 475

[C](#). SECSTATE 49092

Classified By: Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo for reasons 1 (B), (D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: On July 21, the Somalia Sanctions Monitoring Group (MG), a UN team mandated to monitor and report on compliance with the Somalia arms embargo and resolution 1844, briefed the Somalia Sanctions Committee ("751 Committee") on a proposed list of nine individuals, including three ranking Eritrean government officials, and two entities to be targeted for sanctions. The UK announced in the meeting that it was ready to move forward with designating the names on the list, but later clarified to USUN that the UK will play a "supporting" role to the US and France and notionally supports the MG's recommendations. All other committee members stated that they were awaiting guidance from capitals. Libya and Turkey warned, however, that the evidence against Eritrea must be air tight and other delegations noted that the committee should be careful not to further isolate Eritrea. END SUMMARY.

Monitoring Group Briefs the Somalia Sanctions Committee

[1](#)2. (SBU) On July 21, the Somalia Sanctions Monitoring Group (MG), a UN team mandated to monitor and report on compliance with the Somalia arms embargo and resolution 1844, briefed the Somalia Sanctions Committee ("751 Committee") primarily focusing on the MG's submission of proposed targets for sanctions (REF A). The MG also answered questions about the Government of Eritrea's (GOE) involvement in Somalia and recommended a number of enhancements to the Committee.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Matt Bryden, MG coordinator and Regional Expert, stated that all designation targets, aside from one, are "prima facie" cases, meaning that public statements have been made by the individual or entity taking responsibility for the actions reported by the MG. Much of the evidence against the targets, he said, was based on past MG reports to the Committee and open source information. Bryden further explained that although two individuals are already designated under the 1267 Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee, the cases stand alone under 1844 violations in Somalia.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Bryden stated that the MG was disappointed that the GOE "postponed" the MG's scheduled visit to Asmara this month, noting that postponements have occurred numerous times. Given the lack of access to Eritrea, the MG decided to move forward with the three Eritrean targets based on previously gathered evidence, including past MG reports, public statements, and evidence of GOE financing Somali armed groups. Bryden also cited incidences of members of Somali armed groups travelling on Eritrean passports.

[1](#)5. (SBU) The MG recommended the following enhancements to

the work of the committee: 1) outreach to Member States to explain responsibilities under resolutions 1844 and 1853, including a visit by the Chair to the region; 2) outreach to the Somali English and Arabic-speaking media to explain the basis of the sanctions and the role of the committee and MG; and 4) inclusion of stronger wording in future UNSC resolutions regarding obligations of Member States to address governments' unwillingness or inability to share information with the MG.

¶6. (C) In bilateral meetings with USUN prior to the committee briefing, the MG and POLOFF discussed the MG's security, an area of concern for the UN Secretariat. The MG believes that in contrast to Mogadishu, where AMISOM provides security for the MG, the group is more vulnerable in Nairobi where it is based. The Secretariat is considering moving the MG's base of operations to the Gulf. On the changing political dynamics in the region, Bryden stated that, in his opinion, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was growing weaker, but the reports of increased foreign fighters in the region are overstated by the media. According to Bryden, the perception of the TFG in the region is that it is "floundering." He called TFG weakness "a political problem," not simply a problem of military assets. Bryden stated that the TFG has not risen to the level of a governing body or military force, and has remained an uncoordinated, clan-based organization comprised of shifting alliances.

#### Committee Reactions to Monitoring Group's Proposed List

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¶7. (SBU) During the Committee meeting, the UK representative stated his government's readiness to move forward with

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designating all the names on the MG's list. The UK mission later qualified this statement (see para 8). All other delegations stated that the list was under review by their respective capitals. There was some general discussion over the Eritrean names with Libya questioning the veracity of the MG's evidence; Turkey cautioning that the Committee needed to be "one hundred percent" certain of the allegations against Eritrea; and Japan stressing that there are on-going diplomatic efforts in Tokyo to reach out to the Eritrean ambassador.

#### US-UK Meeting On Designations

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¶8. (C) On July 22, USUN POLOFF met with UK expert to discuss next steps on designations. The UK expert said London had no intention to lead on designations but would support the US and France, which "are the most interested." He explained that forward-leaning statements at the committee were intended to send a strong message that London takes the issue very seriously, including the involvement of Eritrea in Somali affairs. The UK expert stressed the importance of the political message even though all targets proposed by the MG may not be obtainable given committee dynamics.

¶9. (C) The UK expert outlined his priorities for 1844 designations: 1) Eritreans; 2) Armed opposition groups (Al-Shabaab being the most important); and 3) Piracy. (NOTE: The French have made clear to the US their interest in piracy designations. REF B; REF C). On the Eritrean names, the UK mission believes the Africans on the committee (Uganda and Burkina Faso) can solicit Chinese and Russian support. The UK representative acknowledged the problem of missing bio-identifiers (information like date/place of birth that is essential for implementing sanctions effectively) and explained that London was searching for missing information. POLOFF underscored the need for bio-identifiers, explaining that the US designation process cannot proceed without the information. USUN and UKUN agreed to coordinate closely in advance before submitting to the Committee any final designation package.

